Industry Profiles

Agriculture Industry

Revised: February 2008

Alberta
Employment, Immigration and Industry

Overview:

The Agriculture industry[1] in Alberta includes a variety of establishments or services:

- farms, orchards, greenhouses, nurseries and other places that grow crops, plants or trees;
- ranches, farms, feedlots and other places that raise animals, produce animal products or fatten animals;
- fishing and trapping activities; and
- agricultural support services such as planting, harvesting or management.

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[1] North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) groups 111, 112, 114, 1151 and 1152

Section A: Business Environment

1. 2006 Employment and Unemployment Numbers and Rates:

	Alberta	Agriculture Industry
Number of employed	1,870,700	52,300
Percent employed in the industry		2.8%
Number of unemployed	66,8000	N/A
Unemployment rate	3.4%	N/A

Note: N/A is reported in instances of insufficient sample size.

For more information on employment numbers or for a historical comparison, go to the Labour Force Survey or Statistics Canada websites.

2. Industry Growth:

- The Agriculture industry is expected to grow on average 0.3% annually from 2006 to 2011.
- Approximately 789 jobs will be created in the forecast period. Employment is expected to increase to 53,097 by 2011.
- This industry is expected to provide 0.3% of all new jobs in Alberta between 2006 and 2011.

For more information, see the Alberta Modified Canadian Occupational Projection System Outlook (2006-2011) online and the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website's industry descriptions.

Outlook

The *Alberta Occupational Demand and Supply Outlook (2006-2016),* predicts that the Agriculture and horticulture workers will experience a supply surplus every year between 2007 and 2016. The report also states that Agriculture and horticulture workers are also expected to experience a large increase in labour surplus, with a surplus of almost 2,250 individuals in 2006, increasing to approximately 6,400 individuals by 2016.

Across Canada, farms continue to decline in numbers, and many farmers cannot recuperate expenses. According to Statistics Canada, there are now 17,550 fewer farms, or 7% with an estimated 19,140 fewer farmers, in the past five years in the nation. The decline of 7.9% of Alberta farms between 2001 and 2006 will most likely result in more consolidated farms ahead. With a continued strong Canadian dollar and volatile planting seasons in North America, the Canadian Wheat Board also continues to project lower returns for wheat farmers.

As the age of farmers increase, other pressures such as higher wages in oil sands will put pressure on Alberta farms. Rural communities are facing shortages in youth, as generations of farmers pursue more lucrative jobs and are discouraged from an industry with narrow margins.

The emergence of a 'green' movement and the need for alternative sources of energy has brought about potential for Alberta agriculture in the production of bio-fuel energy. Bio-fuel energy has potential to build rural economies, through additional revenue streams and developing new rural industries. Relative to other nations, Canada lags behind European countries and the United States in the development of bio-fuel energy. However, the federal government has committed to investing $2 billion over seven years to support the production of renewable fuels and commercialization of next-generation technologies geared towards bio-fuels, helping farmers to participate in bio-fuels production.

3. Company Size

Establishment Size	Alberta Businesses		Agriculture Businesses	
	Number of Employees	%	Number of Employees	%
Less than 20 employees	525,000	34.1%	9,100	73.4%
20 to 99 employees	543,600	35.3%	2,800	22.6%
100 to 500 employees	292,400	19.0%	N/A	N/A
Over 500 employees	178,900	11.6%	N/A	N/A

Data Source: Labour Force Historical Review 2006, Statistics Canada
Note: N/A is reported in instances of insufficient response.

Section B: Human Resources Profile

1. Occupational Information:

Some examples of occupations in the Agriculture industry include:

- farm worker;
- dairy producer;
- greenhouse operator;
- animal care attendant; and
- beekeeper.

For a complete listing of all occupations related to this industry as well as detailed information on education and skill requirements, visit the Alberta Occupational Profiles website.

2. Demographics: Age and Gender

According to the Labour Force Survey, the gender break-down in the Agriculture industry is as follows:

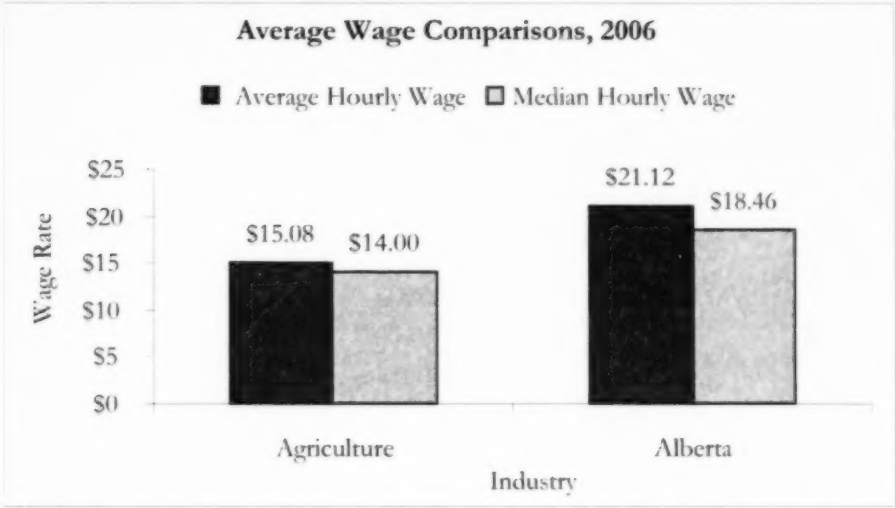
- women employed: 16,100 people, or 30.8%
- men employed: 36,200 people, or 69.2%

In comparison, women accounted for 45.3% and men made up 54.7% of the total employed in Alberta.

Age Characteristics	Alberta Employees		Agriculture Industry Employees	
	Number	%	Number	%
15-24 years	329,600	17.6%	7,100	13.6%
25-54 years	1,286,500	68.8%	28,200	53.9%
55 years and over	254,600	13.6%	17,000	32.5%

Data Source: Labour Force Historical Review 2006, Statistics Canada

3. Wages:



Data Source: Labour Force Historical Review 2006, Statistics Canada

Wage and Salary Information for Selected Occupations

Occupation	Average Hourly Wage			Average Annual Salary
	Starting	After 3 years	Top	
Farmers and farm managers	$ 13.23	$ 15.11	$ 19.08	$ 37,683
General farm workers	$ 11.11	$ 14.48	$ 14.42	$ 32,318
Nursery and greenhouse workers	$ 7.96	$ 9.59	$ 11.64	$ 16,823

Data Source: 2005 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey

For more information on wages, refer to WAGEinfo. For job descriptions, duties, required skills and education for specific occupations in the Agriculture industry, visit the ALIS website.

Section C: Additional Information

1. Links to Selected Industry Associations:

- Alberta Agricultural Economics Association
- Alberta Barley Commission
- Alberta Chicken Producers
- Alberta Milk Producers
- Agriculture and Food Council
- Alberta Pork
- Canada Beef Export Federation
- Fruit Growers Society of Alberta
- Canadian Wheat Board

2. Link to Government Library Database:

http://www.servicelink.gov.ab.ca/libraries/workplace/